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his foster kindred accompany him. On the other hand, if he rises to influence, his foster-father is generally his most confidential adviser, and his foster-brothers are employed on the most important missions. 608

The custom of cementing friendship by the milk connection seems a favourite one. Should a woman dream that she has adopted any person as a son, or should any man dream that he has been adopted by a certain woman, the connection is carried out in the same way as the forced adoption before mentioned, and nobody would think of refusing to recognise it. The practice is now falling somewhat into disuse, but it was extremely common not many years ago. Milk from a woman's breast is esteemed a sovereign remedy for cataract and other eye-diseases. A resort to it also establishes the milk-tie for ever afterwards. [787] [757]

It is sometimes customary for a young couple, at the time of marriage, to induce a mutual friend to become their foster-father. The tie is ratified at the time of eating bread together. Bride and bridegroom being seated opposite to one another, the foster-father elect seats himself between them, and taking a piece of bread in each hand crosses his arms, observing to keep the right one uppermost, and puts the bread into their mouths. From that time he is regarded as their father.

The foster relationship is regarded as so close, that marriage between foster relations would be looked upon as incestuous, and, in spite of the precepts of the Koran, it would be impossible for a man to marry the widow of his foster-son. [835]

The formation of these ties is practised in a peculiar way among the Ashimadek clans of Chitral. It is customary for every infant to be suckled in turn by every nursing mother of the clan; consequently there is a constant interchange of infants going on among the mothers, for the purpose of strengthening tribal unity. [853]

The Shins are noted for their miserly habits, which they sometimes carry to great extremes. Every man has a secret hiding place in the mountains, where he conceals his money, metal pots, wife's jewels, and all his most valuable property. Occasional stealthy visits are paid to the treasure, which is never taken out for use except on festive occasions. No feeling of honour seems to exist as to the appropriation of another's treasure should it by chance be discovered, and frequent quarrels arise from this cause. Treasures are frequently lost altogether by the sudden death of the owner, 454 [685]

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before he has had time to confide the secret of their hiding place to his son. The practice is entirely confined to the Shins, who have many legends of lost treasures which have fallen under the guardianship of demons.

In both Chilas and Darel, a practice exists of storing clarified butter in cellars for a great number of years. It turns deep red and keeps for more than a hundred years, when it is much prized. A tree is sometimes planted over the cellar to ensure its not being disturbed, and wealth is computed by the amount of butter stored up. On one occasion a deputation came to me from Darel to ask that some run-away slaves should be compelled to say where they had buried their master's butter, as they alone knew the secret.

Wine, which at one time was universally drunk, is also placed in flagged underground cellars to ripen in large earthen jars, but is never kept more than a year. In digging the foundations of my house at Gilgit, I came on one of these old cellars with two large jars in it, which had evidently been undisturbed for many years. The drinking of wine has much diminished under Islam, and where still practised is concealed as much as possible, except in Hunza and Punyal, where public jollifications are not uncommon. The Maulai sect make no secret of the practice, and on my visit to Hunza, in 1876, a bottle of Scotch whiskey made Ghazan Khan so gloriously drunk that all Hunza spoke of it with admiration.

Polo-playing, of which so complete an account has been given by Mr. Drew, is the national game. Dardistan play, however, lacks the neatness of the Manipoori game; but what is wanting in style is quite made up in enthusiasm, old men joining in the game as long as they are able to sit on a horse. Matches are generally played for some small stake, and the conquerors exact all the rights of victory by taunting their beaten opponents. In Chitral the game, which is called "ghal," is played somewhat differently from the way described by Mr. Drew. Aman-ool-mulk, the present ruler of Chitral, was said to be the best player in the country when a young man.

The game is quite unknown in Badakhshan, where "buzkushi," or "goat-snatching," is the favourite amusement. The following description of this game as played by the Kirghiz is given by Shaw,[1] under the name of "Oughlak ....":

"The headless body of a goat is thrown on the ground, and every one tries to pick it up without leaving the saddle. The game is termin-

[1] Shaw's High Tartary, Yarkand and Kashgar.